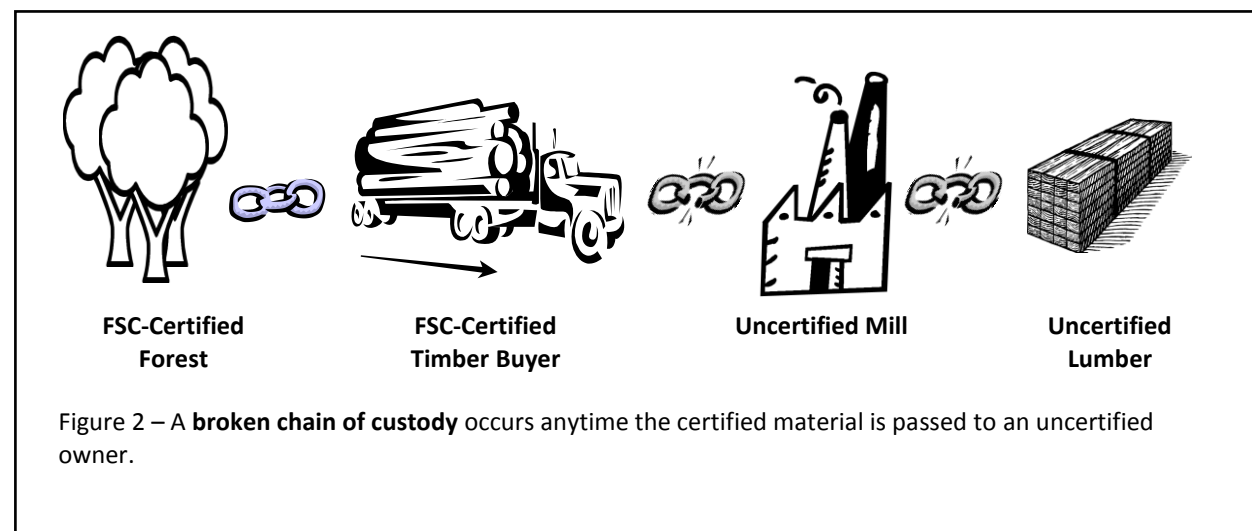
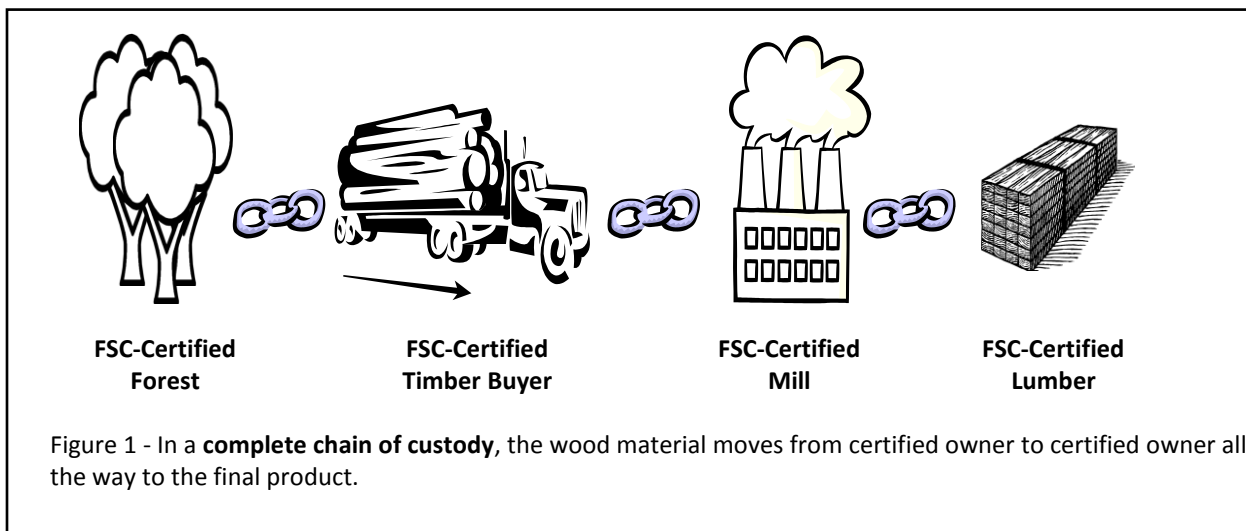


## Forest Certification: Back to the Basics

Do you know where your wood products come from? Do they come from a forest that is being plundered or do they come from a forest that is well-managed for timber and the other forest resources? Forest certification helps consumers answer those questions. Certifying organizations develop standards for good forest management. The Indiana Classified Forest Certified Group is certified through Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC –C071226). Check out the FSC® standards to the left. The standards not only cover how much timber can be removed but also cover other social and ecological factors such as special species and communities, worker safety, water quality and pesticide use.

Certification is not limited to the forest. Forest-industry companies from loggers to veneer companies can be certified. Their certification standards address tracking the wood from the forest to the final product. As long as each owner of the wood in the manufacturing process is certified by the same certifying organization, the final product can be certified. The next time you are looking at a paper or wood product, look for the FSC logo. This is called the chain of custody (Figure 1). If at some point the material is sold to someone who is not certified, the chain is broken, and the wood is no longer certified (Figure 2).



Forest certification recognizes private-forest owners who practice good forest management. It also opens new markets for their timber. The Indiana Classified Forest Certified Group makes it possible for eligible classified landowners to have their forest certified at no cost.